1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

Everyone knows where the boundaries lie between village areas, or between hamlets and other settlements, and there is plenty of land for expansion and for the wandering cattle nomads who traverse the area annually moving their cattle north and south with the coming and going of the rains.

The settlements are all made up of walled compounds and within these are the mud-walled houses with conical thatched roofs, or sometimes grass mat walls with thatched roofs. In the northeast of Bornu the people specialize in a bee-hive shaped house of bound thatch which can be picked up and moved and can reach a size of twenty to thirty feet in diameter, although ten to fifteen feet is more common. A compound is almost always rectangular in shape with mud or grass mat walls and internal partitions. There is only one entrance which is often a house with two doors so that there is a shelter at the doorway for people to gather and visit with the household head. The compounds in any settlement are always arranged in a "U"-shape with the open end towards the west and the closed end on the east. The arms of the U then form the north and south sides of the open plaza where all the major events of town take place. Although in very tiny settlements, big cities, or settlements that have lost a great many people, this U-shape is not often easy to discover, it can be seen by simply asking people where they have their central plaza. When this is pointed out, the questioner knows exactly where to look for the house of the senior political leader of the settlement since his household is always at the bottom of the U in the center facing west. Parenthetically, this means that when individuals or groups pray and bow down toward the east in the open plaza, which they often do, they face the doorway of their local political leader's compound.

Around the villages are fields of millet, the major food staple, guinea corn, ground-nuts, the major cash crop, and numerous specialized crops of vegetables or gourds that vary from place to place depending upon local conditions. Almost everybody does a little farming while goods not produced within the household itself are purchased at local weekly markets that dot the countryside in each of the major villages.

In their culture the Kanuri share ideas about religion, social organization, and subsistence patterns with many of the other peoples of the Western Sudan. Even esoteric items such as pre-pubescent boys' hair styles are shared across wide areas of the southern and central Sahara ranging as far away as Morocco. In their patterns of dress—workshirts and long ground-length robes for men, long shirts and saris for women—they again share many items with surrounding peoples as they do in their love of horses which give a man prestige unless he is one of the few in the cities that owns an automobile. Their language, Kanuri, is not related to other languages of Nigeria, but is shared and closely related to a large group of tongues called Central Saharan that ranges from the Tibesti highlands in northern Chad to Bornu in the southwest and the Darfur region in the modern nation of Sudan, in the southeast. It is a graceful language in which the verb comes at the end of the sentence as in Latin and in which there are many polite circumlocutions for saying things diplomatically. Thus if I wish to say a man is untrustworthy, I do not say it outright. Instead I say quietly that he has narrow eyes, which comes from the saying, "A man with narrow eyes has no shame," he lacks proper respect for his obligations to others. There are many greetings which are adjusted to social rank,

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

were two types of differently named fiefs, the one where membership was territorially based, and the other where membership was ethnic or clan based, that is, based on birth into a particular group regardless of its territoriality. The big lord remained in the capital and administered his various fiefs, sometimes ranging up to twenty or more through his representative, the chima gana, or "the junior lords." Each junior lord lived in one of the fiefs of his superior, the fief-holder, or big lord. This junior lord was the highest authority living in the fief and from him one could appeal to the Shehu, being presented by representatives of the junior lord to the big lord living in the capital, and through this latter person to the court of the monarch.

This central administration was linked up to a local one. There was a village head, or bullama, who usually belonged to the male line of the founder of the settlement. However, he was only one among a group of eligibles. If the local junior lord did not like him or the tributes he delivered, then the junior lord could appoint another member of the same line. There are also some records of junior lords shifting the headship to other lineages as well as to persons within the same lineage. As settlements grew in size, sons, clients, and even slaves of the original village head would hive off and form small settlements or satellite communities nearby under the general jurisdiction of the original village head and the local leadership of the founder of the satellite community. These new heads were called mbarma (hamlet heads) as were heads of sub-sections of the original village that had some sort of unity based on occupation or kinship or a combination of both. Thus a big lord with the help of his junior lords could have his fief-holdings expand in size, and he tried to help this process along by not being too excessive in his demands on the peasants, and by protecting them from raiders and other forms of outside depredation. A big lord's wealth and ability to supply militia to the monarch depended upon his success as a fief-holder, so that it was in his best interests to see to it that each fief was well governed. People could complain to other nobles, or emigrate out of the fief, and such indications of mismanagement, if they continued, could lead to the granting of fief rights to someone else. This new big lord could then take over part of the original holding, or in extreme cases the entire fief was transferred to another big lord's administration.

A very successful village head—one with a large and flourishing settlement containing many satellite communities—could be rewarded for his increase in power and authority by being brought to the Shehu's court in the capital and given the title of lawan. The Shehu then performed a ceremony in which a turban was placed on the new lawan's head. This meant he was now a member, albeit a local one, of the titled nobility of the state. In this case, he not only paid accession-to-office-gifts to the junior and senior lord which all local headsmen did, but to the Shehu as well. Once having been advanced from bullama to lawan, it was now possible for some of the leading heads of satellite villages to be made into bullama (by the junior lord and the lawan) with their own mbarma or leaders of satellite communties under them in turn. If these inter-related communities developed even further, the lawan might be brought into the capital again and be made officially into an ajia by the Shehu, giving bullama and mbarma under him the opportunity of becoming lawan with bullama and mbarma in turn under them, all under final authority of the ajia and the most senior of the junior lords. By this time the big

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rope. From North African manufacturers came cloaks, shawls, red felt and embroidered hats for men, sashes, trousers, carpets, religious books, spices, perfumes, and later, cowrie shells. From the desert came tobacco, barley, wild rice, dates, salt, natron, camels, and various assorted medicines, especially *drupa,* a herb believed to induce fertility in women. In return Bornu sent back sewn cloth, hides, leatherwork, sandals, feathers, ivory, gum arabic, Korans, kola nuts, and, above all, slaves. Caravans were large, and the trip was long, arduous, and dangerous because of the desert and its marauding inhabitants. However, just how important foreign trade was in the area is difficult to assess. The ordinary man probably used very little of outside manufacture, but at the capital such goods were considered necessities for people having any pretentions to higher status in the kingdom.

The Colonial Change

Using this description of pre-colonial Bornu it is now possible to discuss the kind of changes that were brought into the area by the inception of British rule at the beginning of the twentieth century. The British came to Bornu in 1901, after it had been occupied for seven years by Rabeh who had been intent on making himself the founder of its third dynasty. The British had not only to bring Bornu under the Northern Nigerian Government but to resuscitate its leaders who had not been in control of the area since 1893. At first they simply left the Shehu to do as he pleased, with the exception of waging war and carrying on the slave trade, which they vigorously put down. However, the idea of fiefs being ruled by lords at the capital seemed grossly inefficient, and they soon ordered that the Shehu choose his best fief-holders and that these be sent out to the locality of their fiefs to govern. Furthermore they decided to consolidate numbers of fiefs into larger units which they now called districts. There followed a tussle between the British and the Kanuri over how many village areas and how many districts there were going to be, the British generally trying to limit the number while the Shehu and his advisers generally tried to increase them. Finally a number around twenty was worked out for the districts and then village areas were incorporated into them. In general these village areas approximate the size and location of former fiefs. However the Kanuri felt that the head of a district was like a titled, local, territorial chief of the nineteenth century who has control over a large number of settlements, so he was called *ajia,* which translates today as a district head. Under him were heads of village areas that included a number of satellite settlements—and this village area head was—like the *ajia,* appointed and turbaned by the Shehu. He was therefore called a lawan (village area head) as was the titled head of a settlement with satellites during the nineteenth century. The difference, however, was that now there was no fief-holder or his representative to whom the local headmen were accountable. The district head held his office directly under the Shehu and the village area heads were directly under the district head. Small wards and hamlets were now headed up by bullama and the term for a bullama's subordinate, the mbarma, fell into disuse and has now almost disappeared.

The mode of appointing and maintaining these jobs led to problems which were never really solved. The Shehu put up names for the district heads who be-

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

been told of many political leaders who rubber stamp decisions about land transfer, simply registering the fact and witnessing its legality. In some cases, however, there is interference, and it is generally discovered when this happens that there have been some previous difficulties in the owner's relationship to the political leader.

Farm plots are generally used for periods of four to eight years. Then they are allowed to lie fallow for about the same length of time. Everyone in the community knows a fallow field and its owner, and there would be trouble if someone tried to use one of these without the owner's permission. If fallow land is unused because the owner has moved away or has given up farming, then the land reverts to the common disposal of the community as a whole. The political leader can then allot these lands to newcomers or other community members, although he would generally be careful to check claims on them by previous owners and their relatives before doing this.

In summary, from the point of view of the people themselves, there are four different kinds of land around a Kanuri village. First, there is land owned outright by the household head over which he has complete authority. Secondly, there is land that has been cleared by a household head or that he was given the right to use by his local leader and which may become totally his or that of his heirs after long years of use and/or inheritance. Thirdly there is resting land, which is a farm plot that has been in use but whose depleted soil the owner will likely use again. If he moves away without trying to dispense with any of these plots then they revert to free land. Finally, there is free unused land around the settlement that can be used for newcomers or those trying to expand their holdings.

As far as ownership is concerned, about sixty percent of all land in Magumeri was obtained through inheritance. The remaining forty percent was almost all new land cleared outside the present circumference of farm plots in which the plots had been registered with the village head whose permission had been granted. The important thing to remember about this system is that it works. Litigation over land in Magumeri had to do mostly with what we call "trespassing." People were brought to the courts because they (usually their livestock) had infringed on someone's right to land. There was very little difficulty in general over transfers. People knew what rights were held and how they could transfer these rights to others.

Except for the few farmers who produce either specialized crops like yams or tobacco and then market them, most Kanuri have a dry season occupation such as craftwork, trade, or a service occupation such as native doctoring or barbering. These they view as an occupation, while farming, unless it is the only specialty carried out, is viewed as an important side line. As we have seen in the chapter on the life cycle, recruitment into an occupation is carried on by an apprenticeship system within the household organization. This is even the case for some western types of occupation such as truck driving, and it only recedes in importance when western type schooling is involved.

Traditionally, occupations in Bornu have been organized under head men in each settlement and under an overall head man for the entire occupation who lived in the capital city. Today the traditional occupations such as blacksmith, leather worker, butcher, and so on still have such an organization, although the privileges and duties of a head man are very few and do not extend beyond his local settlement. Nevertheless, men in Magumeri who are butchers, blacksmiths or dyers, and

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

and he is a *tada njima* or client of the settlement head. All residents of this new settlement look upon its founder as their local leader. Disputes between members are always taken to Aji before going to any higher authorities while disputes with outsiders follow the general Bornu rule of going first to a political leader superior in rank to both participants. The new settlement does not have a name; however in all likelihood if it continues to grow and Aji's place is taken by one of his heirs, either his brother or his son, it will be called Aji or Ajiri after its founder. At present Aji collects taxes from the men of the new community, and these are taken by the hamlet head of Gworongo to the head of Magumeri village area. Aji hopes that one day he will be able to take the taxes directly to Magumeri, thus helping to indicate his equal political status to that of the hamlet head of Gworongo. When that happens he will be a recognized bullama or head man of a hamlet or ward. He tries to take disputes directly to Magumeri village, but in 1957 this was not accepted and the hamlet head of Gworongo was invariably called to sit in on such discussions.

The same process can be seen operating in larger villages. In Magumeri village itself one ward under its bullama (ward or hamlet head) was, in 1957, becoming large enough so that people were beginning to speak of the possibility of its splitting into two under the old bullama and a new one. In the ward a man named Kachella has under his authority the compounds of several younger full brothers, three of his sons two of whom are married, several nephews, and a few unrelated clients who say they are his *tada njima*. He collects taxes from these compounds and takes the money directly to the village head of Magumeri. However he recognizes the authority of the present ward head in settling disputes and always consults the latter first before taking the matter to a higher authority. One of his sons has married a girl from the household of the ward head and this helps link the two households. The ward head seems tolerant of the rising power and influence of his neighbor and always consults him on any major decision affecting the ward. Eventually however, if the set of linked households under the authority of Kachella continues to expand, then he will become a recognized bullama of his own ward of the village and the office will be passed on to his heirs.

The Village Area

The village area in Bornu includes a major settlement which gives the area its name and a set of surrounding smaller hamlets that are included within the political boundaries of the village area. Thus Magumeri village area includes the village of Magumeri and a series of little hamlets in the surrounding countryside. As we have seen, smaller villages are divided into wards under bullama and the hamlets surrounding the village each have their own bullama as well. In other words all recognized political leaders under a village area head are called bullama. The head of a village area, that is, the political superior of all bullamas in the village area is called the *lawan*. However the system is flexible and a few large cities such as the capital city of Maiduguri, as well as several other centers with populations over 10,000, have several lawan, each in his own ward of the city. Under these city lawan are sub-wards again under the bullama. Thus the traditional nineteenth-cen-

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

tury system of a flexible hierarchy described in Chapter 2 in which the number and authority of political offices can expand with the settlement size is still recognized and practiced.

In Magumeri village area one lawan is responsible for the administration of the entire area. All permanent residents in the area, when asked who their local leader is, reply, "We are the commoners of Lawan Mina. We are his people." This does not apply, or at least applies less, to those persons who live locally and are themselves higher in the political hierarchy than lawan or are local representatives of the emirate civil service departments. They have their own political superiors and are responsible to others besides the lawan. Thus they give their taxes to lawan because they live in Magumeri, and he must collect the village tax, but a dispute between one of these men and a peasant would be adjudicated at a higher level in the political hierarchy than that held by lawan.

In his own part of town the lawan acts as his own ward head. Many of the compounds in the ward are reserved for his own followers, In Magumeri this includes the lawan's own compound with his four wives, married son and grandchildren, several clients and his aged mother. Some twenty followers consider themselves the active supporters of lawan under his chief follower or *wakil*. Each of these men have their own compounds near that of lawan or at least in his ward. They receive economic aid from him in the form of food, clothing, and money as well as a recognized role as a member of his retinue. Peasants often ask one of these followers to intercede with the lawan on their behalf, or to help in arranging a meeting between parties to a dispute with the lawan as the judge.

This retinue of followers who are called collectively by a special name (*waladi*) are linked together under the lawan and serve as his administrative staff. They keep in touch with gossip, aid in collecting taxes, act as contact men for anyone wishing to see him, help him on his farm plots, and carry messages for him. When he travels, several of these men are always with him on horse and on foot, and give him the appearance of being what he is—a man a cut above the common citizenry of the village area—a local official of the kingdom whose title is conferred officially by the Shehu himself. Indeed today his is the lowest rung of the political hierarchy that is recognized as a salaried job in the emirate.

This entire administrative organization of the lawan can easily be discerned by asking the people of his ward whether they would move to another village if he were transferred or dismissed. There are quite a large number in the ward who would remain. These are not his followers but they do regard him as the leader of their ward and like everyone else in the emirate they see him as the official leader of their village area. They have seen several lawans come and go, and if this particular lawan were to continually overstep the limits of his authority, they would not be averse to making some complaints about him to his superiors. Thus their good will and support must be solicited by the lawan. Indeed such a check on his authority applies to all the people in the village area. Another check which any person in the area has over the lawan is the possibility of migration. Any person is free to move away from the village area into another whenever he wishes, and a serious migration out of some political unit weakens the leadership and is almost always interpreted as a sign of faulty administration by superiors in the emirate government.

175 Kukawa while their slaves and subordinates administered their
565 lands and collected taxes. Slaves of the Shehu could them-
631 selves be chimas, and in fact some of the highest titles--
[567] those of Kaigama (a general of the army), and Mastrema (a
[554] eunuch) were reserved for slaves of the Shehu.

175 The "knights" of the Shehu were titled lords, who served
631 as his kabuna. Each lord also had his own kabuna, who vowed
565 allegiance directly to him. The kabuna of the lord actually
567 administered his lands while he lived in the capital. Many of
them were his slaves, but just as slaves of the Shehu could
themselves be powerful nobles, so too slaves of a lord who
were his kabuna were powerful individuals in the villages under
[632] the jurisdiction of their lord. From his kabuna the lord se-
[627] lected the most trustworthy and rewarded them by having them
appointed town heads (Lowan), or to a lesser extent village
heads (Bulama). The Lowan of a town was directly involved in
administering his town, in adjudicating disputes through arbi-
tration and in collecting the property tax (haraji).

634 It was said that the chima was almost the absolute author-
173 ity in his lands. If he saw a horse that he wished to have or
642 a woman whom he admired, he could have them simply by indicat-
ing that he wanted to possess them. No man would refuse him
[643] directly. However, if reports came to the Shehu that a chima
was acting irresponsibly the Shehu could reprimand the man,
175 and could even remove his title from him. Any man could ap-
643 peal directly to the Shehu for justice. The power of the Shehu
642

369 characteristics of the folk society; individuals are specialists
632 of one sort or another; the towns are centers of government at
121 the district level; and stratification rather than social homogeneity characterizes their populations. In this sense it is important to distinguish between Kanuri culture in its urban manifestations and Kanuri culture in the rural villages. These two types of community exemplify two concomitant variants of Kanuri culture. Since there is no sharp line of demarcation indicating at which point a village turns into a town, the distinctions made here are seen to shade imperceptibly into one another. At their extremes, however, the differences are considerable.

621 Probably the bulk of the populace live in villages of less
[622] than 1,000 people. A Lowan, or more typically a Bulama in the smaller village, is the appointed political head of the village.
[463] There is little or no specialization, and everybody farms and depends entirely on the products of his agricultural labors.
[622] The Bulama lives at the same level as the rest of the village. He may own a horse, and his household may be slightly larger,
[565] but he works in the fields as does everyone else. One man may be slightly wealthier than his neighbor, and may own several sheep and goats, but social classes do not exist. Villages are
[595] divided into compounds, within which a family lives. By and
[593] large, men in the villages have but a single wife, and she and
342 her children will live within the compound walls. In the villages, the compound walls are of woven mats (<u>saggi</u>). The houses are almost entirely of the round-walled, thatched-roof type.

632 563 167 turn to their northern villages. A group of Bouzou work at camel transport, and live in a cluster near the slaughter-slab area. Another group of Bouzou work as water-carriers and come [1162] to live in Geidam between agricultural seasons. They all, up to thirty in number, live in the compound of Lowan Ashek.

632 621 Lastly a group of pagans are to be found in a small hamlet called Koldi, about 400 yards northwest of the town proper. [1162] There are forty-five households in Koldi, with a total popula- [622] tion of 134. Koldi has its own Bulama, but Lowan Ashek serves [651] as the Lowan of Koldi and is responsible for tax collection 632 there. The people of Koldi are largely pagan (kordi), and mem- 621 563 177 bers of the following tribes are found there: Banana, Kim, Kabam, Ngizim, Kabalia, Mandara, Kotoko, Gwoza and Fulani. Most of these are tribes found east and south of the Shari River, whose people are pagan or partially Islamized. This is the shatter-belt area between the Empires of Bornu and those of [302] Mandara and Bagirmi. The women of Koldi all do their hair in the Kanuri manner, and the people of Koldi are strongly acculturated to the Kanuri. In fact many Kanuri are found living in [771] Koldi. They are characterized primarily by their lax attitude [275] towards Islam, and are considered pagan because they brew millet beer there. No beer is brewed in Geidam proper, so that Kanuri youths wishing to partake of the local brew are forced to slip [534] away unseen to Koldi. Drumming can constantly be heard in the 632 evenings from the direction of Koldi. The people of Koldi all 621 have farms of millet in the surrounding area, but in addition [243] [385] [463]

they specialize in the making of heavy reed mats (səgdis). Economic specialization along ethnic lines is a common characteristic of the area.

Several types of economic specialty have been mentioned for differing groups in the Geidam community. Each of these is found localized in a particular section of a ward, where those who practice that specialty are grouped. Ibos and Yorubas are small tradesmen in their section of the Hausa ward. Butchers are almost all Hausas, and are to be found clustered together in one ward. Bouzous are either water carriers or transporters who use camels, and each group is found localized in its area. The people of Koidi make səgdis. Among the Kanuri proper, groups specializing in a single economic activity are also found living together in a single localized neighborhood within one ward. For example, the blind specialize in the making of rope, and live as an organized sub-community in their quarter. They have their own head, called the Kaigama, because he is to the Shehu of the blind, who lives in Maiduguri, as the real Kaigama is to the Shehu of Bornu. Other Kanuri craftsmen can be found localized in particular sections. Tanners and dyers live in specific areas grouped around the tanning pits and the dying vats. Craftsmen who make the fine sitting mat (bəji), potters and well-diggers are localized in their own sections; other types of craftsmen, however, are dispersed through the town. Many of the tradesmen are also found clustered in particular neighborhoods. Beggars are found together, and, as has been noted, the Ajia's kabuna tend to live in one ward.

tend to live in one ward.

632 The net effect of the clustering of specialized groups
571 within certain wards is to create sub-communities or neighbor-
621 hoods within each ward. A neighborhood may comprise people who are ethnically alike, or people who practice the same trade, or both. The bond between neighbors, who live in adjacent or nearby compounds, is strengthened by the second bond of practicing the same trade. Neighborhoods are groupings within wards, within which patterns of friendship and visiting tend to occur
[574] with high frequency. A common Kanuri greeting is, "How is your
[434] ward?" On a religious feast day a wealthy man distributes charity to the people of his neighborhood. A bond exists between people of one ward who now find themselves living in a different town. A person will often say, "I know him very well. We're from the same ward. I watched him grow up." These are all examples of recognition that the neighborhood and the ward are
[622] social units which are significant in everyday life. In addi-
[181] tion, since Kanuri life is so structured and hierarchical, craftsmen and tradesmen are frequently organized under a head. The compound of the headman of a group then become the focal point of a neighborhood, just as the compound of each Lowan is the center of his ward.

C. Economy on the Communal Level.

128 The economic activities of the people of Geidam will be discussed in this section, in contrast to the Kanuri economy gen-

• 622

[For information on appointment of the headman of the Fulani living among the Kanuri, see category 563.]

571
621 This same process has occurred at Fallatari, a tiny settlement of five interdependent households, one mile west of Magumeri. Here a semi-nomadic Fulani herdsman settled about 1947 with several brothers. They asked the permission of the Magumeri Village Area Head for this privilege before settling. They have some cows but are today primarily sedentary agriculturalists. The original brothers have now been joined by two strangers, also Fulani, and the settlement now has the political status of a Hamlet, with the original founder as the Ward or Hamlet Head -Bulama.

621
632 The political status of the first settlement still connects it in a subordinate manner to the parent Hamlet of Gworongo. All the people of Gworongo and those of the new settlement call themselves tala Lawan Minabe - the peasants of Lawan Mina - the Village Area Head
[651] of Magumeri and its surrounding cluster of hamlets. The founder collects the taxes from the other males of the new settlement and gives it to the Village Head of Magumeri. He would rather take disputes with other community members to the Magumeri Village Area Head for adjud-
571 ication, than to the Hamlet Head of Gworogo and does so. As the years
621 pass, and if the new settlement prospers and expands, bit by bit the
622 founder or his heir in this embryo Hamlet will come to be identified as a Bulama (Hamlet Head). As long as people live in the settlement, the heir to the founder's compound will have the status of Hamlet Head and represent the little community as its political leader to those in the hierarchy above him. He will in turn be the instrument through which the political control of those below him is exerted by the wider political organization of the state.

361 In the following diagram of the new settlement near Gworongo, it should be noted that although the Hamlet-to-be has not yet taken on

[Text continues on p. 233]

If the extended household head can maintain the subordination of his followers, then he is on the way to becoming a "big" man which may eventually mean his attainment of the political position of Hamlet or ward head (Bəlama), depending upon the location of his settlement. This achieved status is then stabilized through the inheritance rules.

The Village Area

The small village area includes a town cluster of adjoining compounds (usually 500-2000 population) and a surrounding group of small settlements (Hamlets) in the immediate area. The larger towns are broken down into wards, and as we have seen the ward head and the hamlet head have the same political status, that of Bəlama. This is due to their similar political roles as local leaders under the Lawan (Village Area Head). In larger cities such as Maiduguri, Geidam, or Nguru, the "wards" of the city include such large populations that their head men receive the title of Lawan. These Lawans in turn have Bəlama under them as heads of sub-ward divisions in their jurisdictional area.

In the town of Magumeri, the Lawan has jurisdiction over all persons in the Village Area who describe themselves as his peasants. This excludes all persons who are directly subordinate to the District Head, the Judge, or the N.A. in Maiduguri. Formally he collects a Haraji (assessment) tax from everybody except the District Head, but in reality, he has little political control over anyone who has functioning attachments to the Bornu N.A.

The Lawan acts as his own ward head, of the nguro Lawantari (the Lawan's ward), and many of the compounds in this ward house the followers of Lawan, i.e. the members of his extended household organization. Some of the householders had compounds in this ward long before

632 571 If the Lawan moves to another town, or is dismissed, the persons who are his tada move with him, while his tala (peasants) wait patiently for a new Lawan to collect taxes and to settle their disputes.

632 871 Wisely, the Lawan's son in Magumeri stays out of any active leadership role in his father's organization. His job as the adult education (literacy) organizer for the District of Magumeri, keeps him travelling much of the time and he never interferes with the political organization which he may one day inherit. During the entire period of the field trip he was never once observed taking any role of power and authority towards any of his father's followers, all of whom treated [554] him with deference. His father is one of the few enthusiastic supporters of adult education and enforces its innovation quite vigorously in his own jurisdictional area, since he knows that this will raise his son's political respectability in the Bornu N.A.(1)

632 423 [622] All land use rights in the village area except hereditary usufruct are vested in the Lawan. However, dispensation of land use rights can, in practice, be carried out by Hamlet Heads within the hamlet boundaries, although all such decisions must be cleared with Lawan 632 before their final validation. The Lawan is also approached and told of all land rentals which he witnesses. As noted before he is paid a fee for witnessing marriages and ratifying divorces, and he hears and tries disputes involving his peasants. Indeed most peasants feel more secure about any decisions they have made affecting their neighbours

[208] (1) The Magumeri Village Area peasants are nevertheless not responding very keenly to adult education. They find Lawan's enthusiasm for literacy rather confusing, since one of the main propaganda themes given to innovators by the N.A. (designed by the British) is the alleged skill that literacy gives the peasants in ascertaining whether or not their tax receipts actually correspond to their payments. The fact that it is the Lawan who taxes them - and overtaxes them they believe - and he as well who prods them to learn to read, is one reason why they are mistrustful of the literacy campaign.

554 828 829 within this structure. The higher the status of an individual, the more arziyi he has, and the success of any one individual either in moving from one role to another, or in performing any given role also indicates the extent of his arziyi.

631 The Kanuri political system has been described in terms of the organization of power and authority in increasingly scaled social structures starting with the extended household organization and 621 ending with a discussion of modern political parties. Any local residence group in Bornu is potentially a larger political unit either in the form of a ward within a town or as a separate hamlet in the bush. This unit resembles an extended family organization but may include non-kin as well as kin members who are all subordinate in some way to the senior male of the residence association. We have used the term [602] extended household organization to describe this flexible unit. The relation of all subordinates to the senior member is similar to that between a father and his sons and non-kin as well as kin members 621 bring their wives to this unit at the local level. If the extended 557 household organization head can maintain the subordination of his fol- [622] lowers, then he is on the way to becoming a "big" man. This can eventually lead to his attainment of the political position of Hamlet Head or Ward Head (Belama). This achieved status is then stabilized through inheritance.

621 571 At the local level, the extended household organization applies to a territorial unit of closely contiguous compounds each with its own head but with some form of subordination to the head of the larger unit. As we have seen, in other sections of the political organization and in the economic organization this kind of superior/subordinate relationship may be spread out to include men not living